



Statement by

Tharron McIvor  
Deputy Permanent Representative, Vienna

at the

2018 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the  
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Cluster II

Geneva 2018

Chair

As a long-standing and committed advocate of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, New Zealand approaches this week's debate as an opportunity to purposefully and constructively reaffirm our collective view that an effective global nuclear non-proliferation regime is fundamental to building a secure world. As we prepare to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the entry into force of the NPT, we must set an ambitious agenda that underlines and strengthens States Parties' commitment to the Treaty and implementation across all pillars.

I would like to make five main points today, focusing primarily on the critical role of the NPT's safeguards system.

Firstly, New Zealand wishes to underscore that the NPT safeguards system, with its core objectives of transparency and accountability, is vital for the global non-proliferation regime. The integrity of the International Atomic Energy Agency's verification activities is fundamental to the assurances New Zealand seeks that nuclear activities undertaken by states are solely for peaceful purposes.

We have seen some significant progress in the resolution of safeguards issues over the last few years, notably the agreement with Iran on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). New Zealand views the JCPOA as a truly critical agreement that has made and continues to make a vital contribution to regional peace and security. We all have a stake in the faithful implementation, and success, of the JCPOA and so we are pleased to announce that New Zealand will contribute another NZD115,000 towards the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran.

Secondly, New Zealand believes it is important to continue to strengthen the application of safeguards and encourage other states to do the same. New Zealand shares the view that an Additional Protocol should always feature as a condition of new supply arrangements for nuclear and associated material. We are pleased that more states are signing onto the Additional Protocol. And, as noted in the VG10 paper, we recommend that the 2020 Review Conference affirm that a comprehensive safeguards agreement, together with an Additional Protocol, represents the current verification standard pursuant to article III (1) of the Treaty.

Thirdly, New Zealand recognises the important contribution to nuclear non-proliferation of effective export controls. New Zealand welcomes – and contributes to – the valuable role that the Nuclear Suppliers Group and Zangger Committee play in supporting the fundamental non-proliferation objectives of the NPT, to which we

are all committed. It is New Zealand's view that the NPT is the cornerstone of these export control regimes and this guides our participation in these groups.

Fourthly, New Zealand shares the concerns of others at the current global security situation. For us, the increasing uncertainties we are faced with only serve to emphasise and underscore the value and importance of a rules-based system, including in response to serious proliferation challenges such as the DPRK. New Zealand has over recent years repeatedly expressed its grave concerns at the DPRK's efforts to develop nuclear weapons in blatant defiance of UN Security Council Resolutions. We welcome indications from North Korea that it is willing to cease nuclear tests and that it will not transfer nuclear weapons technology. New Zealand has also welcomed the latest diplomatic efforts, including last week's meeting of the leaders of North and South Korea. We see this as a positive first step towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, supported by IAEA monitoring and verification.

Fifthly, New Zealand is proud to stand with 60% of the world's states covered by nuclear-weapon-free zones, including all states of the Southern Hemisphere. This is a powerful demonstration of the collective will that can exist at a regional level to rid the world of nuclear weapons. New Zealand has for more than 30 years advocated for Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and the role they play in promoting and safeguarding regional and international peace and stability, supporting global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, and reinforcing the NPT itself. In this regard, we again reaffirm our strong support for the initiative to establish a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Chair

In closing, New Zealand's commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation is deep and enduring, stemming from our strong belief that nuclear weapons do not make the world a safer place. New Zealand strongly believes that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are inextricably linked and that dedication, commitment, and action on both fronts is essential for the realisation of a world free of nuclear weapons, as envisaged by the drafters of the NPT.

Thank you Chair.